

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 4256

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, US, IS, RO

SUBJECT: ROMANIAN JEWS

1. DURING MY COURTESY CALL TODAY, FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON
DESCCUSSED IN SOME DETAIL HIS VISIT TO ROMANIA AND HIS
DISCUSSIONS WITH CEAUSESCU AND MACOVESCU ON SUBJECT
INCREASED EMIGRATION OF ROMANIAN JEWS. HE STATED THAT
CEAUSESCU HAD PROMISED HIM THAT ANY JEWS WHO WANTED TO BE
REUNITED WITH FAMILY MEMBERS COULD LEAVE ROMANIA FOR ISRAEL.
MACOVESCU PROMISED THAT BUREAUCRATIC PROCEDURES WOULD IMPROVE.
FURTHER MORE, RABBI ROSEN WAS GIVEN GREEN LIGHT BY ROMANIAN
AUTHORITIES TO USE SYNAGOGUES TO ENCOURAGE EMIGRATION.

2. IN ANSWER TO MY QUESTION, ALLON STATED THAT THE ROMANIAN
OFFICIAL ESTIMATES OF HOW MANY JEWS WANTED TO LEAVE WERE TOO
LOW, BUT ADMITTED THAT ISRAELI ESTIMATES WERE TOO HIGH. HE SAID
HE HAD PRESSED THE ROMANIANS TO HAVE "OPEN SEASON" ON
JEWISH IMMIGRATION FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE
THIS MAJOR FRICTION IN ROMANIAN-ISRAELI RELATIONS. ALTHOUGH
THERE WAS NO AGREEMENT ON THIS SUGGESTION, ALLON WAS
ENCOURAGED BY THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WHICH COULD RESULT IN
GREATLY INCREASED JEWISH IMMIGRATION OVER A SUSTAINED
PERIOD OF TIME.

3. ALLON SAID THAT A TOTAL OF 199 JEWS HAD IMMIGRATED IN
JUNE AND THAT IT APPEARED THAT BETWEEN 250 AND 300 WOULD ACTUALLY
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IMMIGRATE IN JULY, WITH HOPES FOR PERHAPS EVEN MORE IN AUGUST.

ALLON NOTED THAT, OF COURSE, THE ROMANIANS WERE AIMING AT FAVORABLY INFLUENCING THE U.S. CONGRESS IN ORDER TO OBTAIN MFN IN SEPTEMBER. THERE WERE SOME, ALLON STATED, WHO WERE SKEPTICAL THAT ROMANIA WOULD CONTINUE TO ALLOW A HIGH LEVEL OF IMMIGRATION IN EVENT MFN IS APPROVED IN SEPTEMBER. ALLON THOUGHT THAT PROVISION OF LAW WHICH WOULD REQUIRE A REVIEW OF MFN TEN MONTHS AFTER SEPTEMBER MIGHT KEEP THE FIGURES UP.

4. COMMENT: RABBI MILLER HAD TOLD US THAT HIS MINIMUM TARGET FOR JUNE WAS ABOUT 200, WITH AT LEAST 250 AS TARGET FOR JULY (TEL AVIV 3964). ALLON DID NOT ALLUDE TO THE GOI POSITION TOWARD MFN AND I DID NOT RAISE THIS SUBJECT WITH HIM. ALLON CONVEYED THE IMPRESSION, HOWEVER, THAT IF THE FIGURES ARE INDEED AS HE SUGGESTED, THE GOI WOULD NOT TRY TO BLOCK MFN IN CONGRESS.

TOON

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